

The Musical World.

(REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER.)

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PURSUANT to an Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division), made in an action "In the MATTER of the ESTATE of JOHN ALLISON, deceased, Sharpus v. Hodge, 1882, A. No. 884," the CREDITORS of John Allison, late of Glenhaven, Elstree, in the county of Herts, and of No. 33, Oakley Square, Hampstead Road, in the county of Middlesex, carrying on business as a pianoforte manufacturer, under the style or firm of Ralph Allison and Sons and Allison & Allison, at Nos. 167, 169, and 171, Wardour Street, Oxford Street, and at No. 3, Wellington Street, and at Stibington Street, St Pancras, all in the county of Middlesex (who died in or about the month of February, 1882), are, on or before the 2nd day of October, 1882, to send by post prepaid to Charles Henry Theodore Wharton, a member of the firm of Yorke & Wharton, of No. 29, Conduit Street, Bond Street, London, W., the solicitors of the defendant, Thomas Reynolds Hodge, the executor of the will of the deceased, their Christian and surnames, addresses and descriptions, the full particulars of their claims, a statement of their accounts, and the nature of the securities (if any) held by them, or in default thereof they will be peremptorily excluded from the benefit of the said order. Every creditor holding any security is to produce the same before the Honourable Mr Justice Kay, at the Chambers of the Vice-Chancellor Sir Charles Hall, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, Middlesex, on FRIDAY, the 3rd day of November, 1882, at One o'clock in the Afternoon, being the time appointed for adjudicating on the claims.—Dated this 16th day of August, 1882.—H. F. CHURCH, Chief Clerk.—A. LESLIE, 34, Conduit Street, Bond Street, London, W., Solicitor for the Plaintiff.

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BIRMINGHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

August 26th.

This greatest of musical Festivals, properly so termed, begins its accustomed triennial celebration on the morning of Tuesday next. We say "greatest" advisedly; and with the proud conviction of our amateurs, that England is *not* the "unmusical country" which certain quidnuncs would fain have us believe, may amplify the phrase, to "greatest" *at home or abroad*—Germany and the Festivals of the Rhine taken into account. As such, indeed, has it been justly regarded ever since Mendelssohn brought out and conducted the memorable performance of his *Elijah* on the 26th of August, 1846, and as such, with equal right, esteemed from 1849, when the entire musical direction was invested in the hands of Mr (now Sir Michael) Costa, who has honorably maintained it until now, and whose despotic rule has been used exclusively for good. A detailed history of the rise and progress of the Birmingham Festival would at this time be superfluous. From a comparatively unimportant beginning, more than a century past, (1768), when the first Festival was held in aid of the General Hospital, the profits derived from which enabled the committee to hand over £299 to the fund, it has gradually risen, step by step, to the exceptionally high position it now occupies, benefitting Charity and Art in equal measures. Its contributions to the hospitals are now reckoned by thousands instead of hundreds; and scarcely a meeting is on record the programme of which does not contain some new works, sacred and secular, either written expressly for Birmingham, or—like the *Lobpreisang*, and Pianoforte Concerto in D minor of Mendelssohn (the first conducted the second performed by the great composer himself)—previously unheard among us.

The prospectus of the coming celebration exhibits even a larger variety of attraction than that of 1879. The managing directors, as in honour bound, devote the morning of the first day to Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. This glorious work, the essence of modern oratorio in its dramatic significance, is unlikely to be superseded, notwithstanding the incessant denunciations of a certain school, whose sworn disciples would gladly put Liszt's *Christus* in the place of Handel's *Messiah*—which, going from the New Testament to the Old, would be equivalent to substituting the worship of Baal for that of Jehovah, the prophets of the grove for the ministers of the true religion. Meyerbeer once said of the zealots militant who, since his death, have congregated at the shrine of the Bayreuth Oracle, with Abbé Liszt as recognized chief—"These gentlemen would not only, if it was in their power, commit our works to the fire but our bodies also." Of course, the much-reviled composer of the *Huguenots* spoke in metaphor, roused by the fierce objurgations of Wagner* and Wagnerians against himself in particular and his Art-manifestations in general. Happily there is little danger for *Elijah*, which has been given on every occasion at Birmingham since the Festival of 1846, and most probably will be repeated, Festival after Festival, until the first and second Bayreuthiad, with all the attendant hubbub and vain boasting shall have passed into oblivion. A fine—perhaps, in the circumstances, unusually fine—execution of *Elijah*, with Costa as the animating spirit, may be looked for with undisturbed complacency. Sir Michael was always a staunch Mendelssohnian, as he has triumphantly proved over and over again. On the evening of Tuesday one of the leading promised novelties, in the shape of a secular cantata, entitled *Graziella*, from the pen of Sir Julius Benedict, will be produced. *Graziella* was originally intended for the Norwich Festival of last autumn, when, after having been conductor since 1845, Benedict handed over the *bâton* to Signor Randegger. On the other hand, not to be entirely dissociated from the city for which he had done so much in a musical way, Benedict pledged himself to furnish a new cantata for the occasion, but was prevented by severe and protracted indisposition from completing it in time. Such a treasure was not, however, to be lost to the world of art; and so the Managing Committee of Birmingham, much to their credit, applied for and obtained it for their Festival. *Graziella* alone will suffice to endow the first evening concert with a special value, and the performance will acquire additional interest from the fact that it is to be superintended by the veteran composer himself. This rule, in fact, applies generally to the new works, which, without exception, will be conducted by their respective composers, Sir Michael Costa limiting his inestimable aid to the known masterpieces and the personal supervision of the entire musical proceedings.

For Wednesday morning we are promised the great novelty of the Festival—M. Gounod's long contemplated oratorio, *The Redemption*. About this work, its scope and purport, much has already been printed in the columns of our London daily and weekly con-

temporaries, to say nothing of the Birmingham papers—so much, in short, as to absolve us, even did space permit, from a description *in extenso*. M. Gounod, nevertheless, who has compiled and edited his own text (the English translation of which, in prose and verse, is due to the Rev. J. Troutbeck) may be allowed to say a word for himself. His work, he tells us, "is a lyrical setting forth of the three great facts on which depends the existence of the Christian Church . . . the Passion and Death of the Saviour; His glorious life on earth, from the Resurrection to the Ascension; and the spread of Christianity through the medium of the Apostles." This trilogy, we are further advised, is preceded by an introduction, or "Prologue," treating of the Creation, the fall of our first parents, and the promise of a Redeemer. In another note M. Gounod informs us that he wrote the words in the winter of 1867-8, at Rome, where he composed two musical pieces only—the "March to Calvary," which opens Part I. of the Trilogy, and the commencement of the first division of the third part ("Pentecost"). Thus some twelve years of a by no means inactive or uneventful career have—with occasional interruptions dependent upon labours in another sphere of Art—been devoted to the consideration and gradual completion of this, M. Gounod's last important effort. Twelve years, however, will not have been unprofitably spent should results justify the high aspiration of the poet-composer. What are the intrinsic merits of *The Redemption*, what its chances of a success worthy the pen to which we owe *Faust*, *Mireille* (that singularly unappreciated opera), *Romeo et Juliette*, and so many productions of acknowledged distinction, remains for proof. M. Gounod himself is said to regard it as the work of his life, the work upon which he relies for the perpetuation of his name; and this alone should weigh materially in the balance. All we can add just now is, that in form and spirit it is quite original, differing in these essentials from any and every "oratorio," so called, with which we are acquainted. For the actual (we do not presume to say the final) test we must look to the performance next Tuesday in Birmingham Town Hall.

To the remaining advertised novelties a bare allusion must at present suffice. Foremost among them may be named a new secular cantata by Herr Niels Gade, "worthiest of worthy Danes," as he has been styled, whose merit, discovered by the always observant Mendelssohn in 1843, was soon generally recognized, and who has laboured earnestly since then to verify what Mendelssohn predicted—with what success it remains for connoisseurs to decide. The favourable reception awarded to Gade's sacred cantata, *Zion*, at the Festival of 1876, and to his *Crusaders* in 1879, justifies a hope that his *Psyche*, which is to engross the first part of Thursday evening's concert, may be entitled to an equal measure of praise. That the subject of this cantata is built upon the beautiful Greek myth of *Psyche* and *Eros* will be readily divined. Yet another important novelty is a sacred cantata entitled *The Holy City*, the composition of a talented local musician, who has drawn his materials, with the exception of two hymns and a verse from Milton ("List the Cherubim Host in Thousand Choirs"), entirely from Scripture, and to a certain extent from *Revelations*. The choice of this work has afforded more than ordinary satisfaction to the Birmingham people, by whom Mr Gaul is highly esteemed. Add to the foregoing a new orchestral symphony in G major by Mr Hubert Parry, so well beholden at the Crystal Palace, together with an orchestral serenade in the same key by Mr Villiers Stanford, no less highly rated by the lovers of good music at Cambridge, and it must be admitted that new compositions are rather the rule than the exception. That in other respects the programme should be made attractive depended exclusively upon Sir Michael Costa, who, as usual, has justified the confidence reposed in him. We have no room left for details, but may simply mention that while the imperishable *Messiah* holds the place of honour on Thursday morning, Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, Mozart's incomparable G minor symphony, Mr. F. H. Cowen's graceful *Suite de Ballet* (*The Language of Flowers*), Cherubini's superb Mass in C major, No. 4, recommended, we understand, by that erudite musician and admirable critic, Mr. Henry Lincoln, and other good things of their kind too numerous to specify, are comprised in the general arrangements. With the same experienced chief in control, it need scarcely be added that a numerous orchestra, chosen from the most practised executants (M. Sainton leading violin) has been secured. About the magnificent chorus, inseparable from the Birmingham Festivals, it is unnecessary to say a word. The list of solo singers, including Mesdames Albani and Marie Roze, Misses E. Farnol and Anna Williams (sopranos), Mesdames Patey and Trebelli (contraltos), Messrs E. Lloyd, W. H. Cummings, and Joseph Maas (tenors), Messrs Santley, F. King, and Foli (basses), is as powerful and efficient as could be desired. Mr Stockley, according to custom, is chorus-master (an abler it would be difficult to find), and the veteran Mr Stimpson, organist. We should have stated that *The Redemption* is not only to be given on

* Wagner, to whom Meyerbeer, the unsophisticated and gifted "Jew," gave two irresistible pushes in his artistic career, for which Wagner was ever after grateful.—Dr Blüde.

Wednesday morning, but a second time on Friday evening. From all credited accounts the Birmingham Festival of 1882 promises to be one of the most successful on record.—*Graphic*.

* * * * *

Birmingham, Sunday.

Three years ago, when the festival of that date was in progress here, it became my duty, and the duty of others discharging the same functions, to sound a note of warning and censure. The great musical solemnity of which we are all proud manifested symptoms of weakness and decay. There was obvious in its management a lack of enterprise and vigour, and, in other respects, a tendency to fall below the high standard applicable to an institution so exalted in character and claims. On all hands amateurs regretted this; protested against it; and asked, not whether a remedy would be applied at all, because Birmingham is a practical place, but when it would be applied and in how drastic a fashion it would operate. We were not kept long in suspense. Birmingham went to work after a mode characteristically thorough. It simply revolutionised the management of the festival, bowing out this and that "minister," and bringing new blood into the cabinet, pledged to vigorous action, and committed to salutary reforms. The full effect of the change we do not yet see, though the next few days will show it. But even now it is impossible to look at the programme of the Festival which begins on Tuesday next and not discern that another era in the history of the institution has opened. Six new works of importance surely present the fact in a light strong enough for the dimmest vision. After this the rest may be taken for granted, and word may go forth that the Birmingham Festival is itself again.

One of the novelties—M. Gounod's oratorio, *Redemption*—has already been noticed in our columns, and little of a preliminary nature remains to be said about it. The work was fully rehearsed yesterday afternoon under its famous composer's direction, with most satisfactory results; M. Gounod describing the execution as "marvellous," and the amateurs present applying terms hardly less complimentary to the music. How far justice was done in either case is a matter for future consideration; but there can be no doubt at all that the new oratorio is exciting an enormous amount of interest. This may be best shown by absolutely truthful figures. The number of places taken in advance for the Wednesday morning of the Festival week three years ago, including presidents' and vice-presidents' tickets, was 759; the number allotted for next Wednesday morning, when *Redemption* will be given, is 2,111. The oratorio is set down for Friday evening also, and not a disengaged place remains in the hall; while a considerable number of applications have perforce been declined. This is unprecedented in the history of the Birmingham or any other Festival, and not only shows the power of M. Gounod's name, but justifies the enterprise which purchased his new work at an unexampled outlay. May it not do something more, and demonstrate the continued partiality of the English public for oratorio? I question much whether an opera by M. Gounod would excite one-half of the interest now shown in his *Redemption*, armed with which he comes before our people, preferring the most effectual claim upon their good graces. As an instance, I may state that arrangements have already been made to produce the work in London, Bristol, Brighton, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Wolverhampton, and, across the Atlantic, in Toronto. Taking the other novelties in the order of the programme, Sir Julius Benedict's cantata, *Graziella*, first claims attention. In this the veteran composer is associated with Mr Henry Hersee, and librettist and musician between them have produced what appears, on the short acquaintance as yet possible, a bright, interesting, and attractive piece. *Graziella*, as amateurs may remember, was originally intended for the Norwich Festival of last year, but could not be got ready in time. The loss of East Anglia will doubtless prove the gain of the Midlands; and in any case the presence of Sir Julius Benedict at Birmingham as the author of a new work thoroughly accords with the fitness of things. *Graziella*, announced for next Tuesday evening, will be followed, on Wednesday evening, by a sacred cantata, *The Holy City*, composed by Mr Gaul, a highly esteemed local musician, whose name is widely known as the composer of some excellent part-songs, anthems, &c. Mr Gaul's opportunity is a great one; that he may prove worthy of it must be desired by everybody who wishes well to English music. We cannot afford a single check along the happily advancing line of native art. An orchestral serenade in four movements, by Mr Villiers Stanford, is set down for performance with *The Holy City*. Of this work the best hopes are entertained, for reasons other than the fact that its composer has already achieved distinguished successes. Whenever rehearsed, the serenade makes friends among the many who still love music that is intelligible and pleasing as well as ambitious. On Thursday evening, *Psyche*, a cantata by Herr

Niels Gade, will afford the well-known Danish composer another opportunity of winning English applause. The success of Herr Gade's *Crusaders* and *Zion* has not been forgotten here. His popularity is great, and public opinion prophesied a triumph for the new piece. On this point let figures speak. The number of places secured for the Thursday evening in 1879 was 799; the number taken for next Thursday evening is 1,453. Here we have an absolutely unerring test of the interest excited by Herr Gade's name and work. But this result was to be anticipated, since the protégé of Mendelssohn and Schumann holds no mean, unhonoured place in European art. He has fairly earned the right to speak anywhere, and to be heard with the attention which a master may claim. A symphony, in G major, by Mr Hubert Parry, figures in the same programme with *Psyche*. This composer scarcely needs an introduction to any English audience. His name at least is known as that of a musician of large views as to his individual calling in art. He writes ambitiously, and with boldness as well as persistence in the particular style he has chosen. It would, of course, be premature to discuss his new symphony. Enough, now, that it is a work of great dimensions and much difficulty, and that it could only have been composed at a proportionate expenditure of time and labour. Mr Parry is certainly not afraid of such criticism as that passed by the Emperor Joseph on one of Mozart's operas—"There are too many notes in it."

Turning to the works which are not novelties, the *Messiah* and *Elijah* are found in their accustomed places. Birmingham cannot yet afford to ignore those immortal masterpieces, and would not if it could. They are like pillars which give stability to the musical edifice, and they serve as a standard of judgment in sacred art. *Elijah*, as the child of Birmingham—a child of whom the parent is proud and fond—will always be safe here, even when the attraction of novelty, as in the present case, lessens somewhat the number of applications for seats. In 1879 1,958 places were allotted, whereas now only 1,243 are taken. But not an empty chair need be feared. The great army of half-guinea amateurs in waiting outside will enter and fill them all. Other selections, more or less known, are Brahms's *Triumphlied*, Cherubini's Fourth Mass, Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, Mozart's Symphony in G minor, and the overtures to *William Tell*, *Siege of Corinth*, and *Benvenuto Cellini*. In addition, a number of vocal pieces intended for the display of individual skill rather than presented for their musical interest, diversify the evening programmes. Looking at the scheme as a whole it must be pronounced thoroughly good. I do not see in what respect improvement is possible.

The executive resources of the Festival are on the usual scale, and include a magnificent orchestra of 142 performers, with the veteran *chef d'attaque*, Sainton, at their head. Of this large number, 108 are "strings" unmatched in Europe for tone and ability. The Birmingham "quartet," so long renowned, is assuredly not going to forfeit its character on the present occasion, nor will the "wind" prove unworthy to bear it company, as the names of Messrs Svendsen, Barrett, Dubrucq, Horton, Lazarus, Snelling, Wotton, Haveron, Harper, Mann, Webster, Hughes, and Hawes amply guarantee. The chorus numbers 362, and is of splendid quality—beyond question the best that the able and indefatigable chorus-master, Mr Stockley, has had in hand for many years past. The voices are young and fresh, of excellent *timbre*, and perfectly trained to their work. As for the principal vocalists a mention of their names will suffice. They are Mme Albani, Mme Marie Roze, Miss Anna Williams, Miss Farnol, Mme Patey, Mme Trebelli, Mr E. Lloyd, Mr Cummings, Mr Maas, Mr Santley, Mr F. King, and Signor Foli. Mr Stimpson occupies his usual place at the organ, and last, yet very far indeed from least, Sir Michael Costa sits in the conductor's seat, as he has done at every Birmingham Festival for nearly forty years. I am told, and can well believe it, that Sir Michael's reception by his band and chorus has been enthusiastic in the extreme. Enthusiastic also is the greeting that awaits him at the hands of the public, because, mingled with admiration for his great abilities and respect for long service, will be thankfulness that health and vigour are so far restored as to enable him to undertake duties none other could discharge so well. I may add that the prospects of the Festival are everything its friends could wish. The number of seats already secured exceeds by 2,995 the total applied for at the corresponding date three years ago. This means progress in its most substantial form.

* * * * *

Tuesday.

"The French came at me in the old-fashioned way, and in the old-fashioned way I beat them off." Thus said Wellington when once describing the pounding match we call the Battle of Waterloo.

In the old-fashioned way began the festival this morning, as it has begun any time these thirty-six years, and as it will begin for generations to come. The weather was not entirely favourable. Rain fell heavily during the night, and threatened to enrobe itself in the morning. But this Festival, more than any other, is independent of the Meteorological Office. It might rain proverbial "cats and dogs" without emptying a seat in the Town Hall; especially when *Elijah* is the theme. Birmingham, as I have already said, takes pride in its relationship to the greatest sacred work of our century. Moreover, there can be no neglect of Mendelssohn's masterpiece without risking a charge of base ingratitude, and that is not at all in the way of the great Midland Town. *Elijah* is the grandest emblazonment on the Festival banner, and *Elijah* may almost be considered as the battle-cry of its champions. In my last letter I ventured upon a prophecy. I said that, although the applications for numbered (guinea) seats had fallen off in presence of such a novelty as Gounod's *Redemption*, the half-guinea public were ready to come in and fill the hall. My anticipation was not far wrong. Nearly every seat in the spacious building had its occupant this morning, and the old excitement, born of a time when Mendelssohn's work was less familiar than now, seemed to be reproduced. After all, the heart of our amateurs is sound on the question of good music. It refuses faith in the doctrine of bluster and incoherence, and opposes a steady resistance to those who would throw down its classic idols and place above the altar

"A monster of such hideous mien,
That to be hated needs but to be seen."

I rejoice to add that the performance of *Elijah* was worthy of its character and of the esteem in which it is held—worthy, too, of the old Birmingham reputation, not long ago for a moment imperilled. I can only compare it, taken altogether, to the performance of 1876, undeniably the best within recent memory.

The arrangements in and around the Town Hall were excellent, as usual. Everything moved like clockwork, and by the time Sir Michael Costa appeared on the platform the audience were in their places almost to a man. Nothing could have been better. It was the perfection of discipline all round, whether discipline imposed or self-imposed. In this matter the President, Lord Windsor, set a good example; upon which, let me here add, he improved by declining to use his prerogative as the sole fountain of honour in the shape of encores. Nothing was repeated, however much, according to the ordinary standard, it deserved the compliment. Let Lord Windsor go on as he has begun, and set a precedent of inestimable value. Sir Michael Costa's reception could not have been warmer. The audience cheered him with something like a personal expression of friendliness, but were outdone by the band and chorus, whose volleys of applause, as he turned to face them, rang through the hall again and again. Sir Michael's arrangement of "God save the Queen" opened the proceedings as usual, and in the customarily effective way. A more imposing *ensemble* heart could not desire; the perfect quality and balance of the orchestra being equalled by the quality and balance of a chorus which, as I have before said, is the best that Birmingham has produced for many a year. The sopranos sang their solo verse literally like one voice, and that the voice of an artist. Preliminaries over, Mr. Santley, as the almost unique English representative of Israel's great prophet, declaimed the opening recitative, and *Elijah* proceeded on its triumphant way. I am not going, number by number, through the great dramatic oratorio, but it is both just and necessary to point out the more remarkable successes of the performance, to which every one engaged more or less contributed. The band and chorus were superb, with hardly a moment's exception from first to last. They knew their theme, they loved it, and the result followed as of course. Amateurs will need no help in fixing upon the numbers which made the greatest effect. They have in mind the dramatic series of Baal choruses, the glorious "Thanks be to God," the tenderly beautiful "He watching over Israel," the splendidly descriptive "Behold, God the Lord passed by," and the majestic finale. The solos were taken, as to the first part, by Miss Anna Williams, Mdme Trebelli, Mr Lloyd, and Mr Santley; while in the second part Mdme Albani replaced the soprano, and Mdme Patey the contralto. Details of the work done by these artists are entirely needless; nevertheless, "honour to whom honour"—honour especially to Mr Santley, whose Prophet continues, as for years it has been, the most finished creation in oratorio. Our favourite baritone never invested the part with greater intellectual or emotional significance than was the case this morning, and, so far as concerned his share in the work, the "argument" of *Elijah* stood out like that which a noon-day sun illuminates. Mdme Albani, in grand voice, made her mark with "Hear ye, Israel;" Miss Anna Williams gave special effect to the music of the Shunammite woman; and Mdme Patey once more showed the range of her powers by

declaiming the part of Jezebel like a great tragic actress, and singing "O rest in the Lord" like an angel. Mr Lloyd's excellence may be imagined. The two beautiful tenor airs in *Elijah* are never sung by him without creating an impression that they are his peculiar property. Let congratulation, finally, be offered to Sir Michael Costa, who conducted with surprising energy and watchfulness. He was in his old form, and what that means no musical reader requires to be told. So was the Festival inaugurated; and, as though to mark their appreciation, the audience, on retiring, contributed over a thousand pounds to the General Hospital, for which noble charity the Festival exists.

The chief work in the evening's programme was Sir Julius Benedict's dramatic cantata, *Graziella*, poem by Mr Henry Hersee, who has spared his critics the necessity of making any reference to Lamartine, and permitted them to judge the libretto as, in essential respects, an independent thing. I am told that *Graziella* was originally intended for stage representation, and can well believe the report, since Mr Hersee has resorted to devices which, if somewhat familiar in opera, are never ineffective. Almost of course, we have the convent bell, and a chorus of nuns with organ accompaniment; besides which, there is a love token to give decent excuse for an occasional ballad. But the dramatic structure of the poem favours the work as a cantata, imparts to it life and vigour, and secures a fuller measure of personal interest in aid of the interest which is artistic. *Graziella* is divided into three parts, with five *dramatis personæ*—to wit, Graziella, a fisher maiden (soprano); an Abbess (contralto); Renzo, a young fisherman (tenor); Alonzo, a young Venetian noble (baritone); and Gennaro, Graziella's father (bass). The action takes place at a fishing village in the Island of Procida, and one "set" serves for all three scenes. It shows "Cottage of Gennaro at back. Gable-end porch of Convent, R. Glimpse of the Sea, L." Upon this the curtain rises what time the villagers have gathered together after their day's labour. The work opens with a short *undantino* for orchestra, followed by an extended chorus, descriptive of the rest and peace of evening, and the joys of dance and song. Sir Julius naturally divides this into two parts, very different in style and character, but asserting with equal conclusiveness the veteran composer's complete mastery of his theme. Grace and vigour distinguish the first, "See, with slow majestic motion," and almost youthful vivacity the second, "Linger not, the red wine quaffing." In neither case is there any straining after effect, the structure of the music being simplicity itself. But a master can afford to be simple. A more remarkable feature, perhaps, is the unflagging animation of the long-drawn chorus, which very plainly declares that the natural force of Sir Julius Benedict has not abated. At the close of the exordium dramatic action begins with the approach of Graziella, whose "loveliness fair," as we learn from an incidental remark of the chorus, is worshipped by Renzo, "though doomed to despair." Graziella is the conventional, careless-hearted heroine of so many operas, and enters with a "La, la, la," of the approved type. At once the chorus come to business—not their own—demanding why she refuses the "heart of gold" that Renzo persists in offering. Graziella vouchsafes an answer. She has doubts concerning men, and prefers to be free; but it will not do, apparently, to say this in so many words. The time has come for a full statement, and the maiden makes it in "Lovers' vows with honey laden," a song modelled strictly upon the English opera type, and, if not of great musical interest, sufficiently expressive. This would appear to be followed by a dance, as a movement, *tempo di tarantella*, begins, but is interrupted at the tenth bar, by an agitated *allegro*, above which the voice of Graziella presently rises, exclaiming that her father's boat has struck upon the rocks, and demanding help. The chorus—although the main was "laughing" just now—prudently observe "None but a madman would endeavour, To launch a boat in such a sea," and thus excuse themselves. In despair Graziella turns to Renzo: "Thou hast often spoken of love for me; save my father, and I am thine." The young man is not surprised beyond caution. "Give me thy cross as true love's token." He receives the bauble and rushes off. The rescue follows, watched by all on the stage, though invisible to us; watched, moreover, by the nuns, for the convent bell begins to toll, and the pious women are heard chanting a "Miserere," to which the villagers respond, while Graziella keeps all informed as to the progress of Renzo's venture. At length the cry, "My father's saved," makes further prayer needless, and the incident ends with "three cheers for Renzo." The musical treatment of this dramatic scene is noticeable for sustained, yet somewhat tempered vigour. There is no tearing a passion to tatters on the one hand, nor any feeling of tameness on the other. True, the reply of the chorus when Graziella asks for help is measured in character, but the composer intends here, perhaps, to contrast the indifference of an uninterested spectator with the keen emotions of one who has much at stake. The "Miserere" scene may fairly be described as powerful. Its structure is some-

what elaborate, and the difficulties of its composition were assuredly not lessened by the introduction of the bell, which sounds the key-note twice in every bar. Sir Julius, however, is too good a musician to be in the slightest degree embarrassed by his own plans, and the *ensemble* claims rank among distinct successes. Her father rescued, Graziella is expressing joy and thankfulness, when Renzo and Gennaro enter, accompanied by Alonzo, disguised as a poor student. Graziella at once acquaints her father with the claim Renzo has upon her, thus leading up to an *ensemble*, in which—after approved operatic style—each person depicts his or her individual feeling against the background of a less lively emotion common to the chorus. Graziella is thankful, Renzo rapturous, Gennaro paternal, Alonzo love-sick, and the chorus sympathetic. The piece is solidly constructed, huge masses of vocal harmony filling each page from the entrance of the chorus, not unrelieved, however, by the lighter play of the orchestra, and the charm of true melodic phrases.

At the opening of the second scene, Alonzo informs us that he lingers at Procidia, "held captive by the wondrous loveliness of matchless Graziella," and prays that she may yet be his. A song of course follows—one which will fulfil its intended purpose and be often heard apart from the cantata. There is nothing in the work more simple and tuneful than "When first this lonely shore I sought," or more certain of wide popularity. The song ended, Graziella enters, and Alonzo proceeds to urge his suit, first of all, with due appreciation of feminine weakness, declaring that he is not "a student of humble parentage," but "in truth the Count Lavagna." Here the librettist has a surprise in store. We expect Graziella to recall the vow that binds her to Renzo, but not to admit a moment later that her heart, if it were free, would be Alonzo's. This state of things is fairly sprung upon us, as upon Renzo himself, who happens to overhear what is said. Alonzo, about to go away despairing, stops to lead off a trio in which he pleads, "Think of me sometimes when the sun sinks in the western ocean"; Graziella on her part promises to breathe his name at that particular time of day; while poor Renzo, thrilling with "wild commotion," anticipates flight from the ruin of his hopes; all three presently looking forward to a better meeting in the "blissful realms above." This trio is one of the finest numbers the work contains, being admirably written, full of expression, and bearing on every page the stamp of truly artistic taste. At its close, Alonzo is about to depart when Renzo steps from his hiding-place to say, in the most obliging manner, that as he cannot have Graziella's heart he will not have her hand, preferring to seek death on the battle-field. In this spirit he formally releases the heroine from her vow, and, while the orchestra gives out the melody used when the cross was asked for, he generously observes, "As Alonzo's wife may'st thou glide smiling down the stream of life." Naturally the lovers are grateful, and go away happy, leaving Renzo to take the cross from his breast and be moved by it to song. "The shipwrecked heart" is a ballad intended to come out of the cantata, and will probably answer its purpose sufficiently well, though it does not invite particular observation here. Gennaro now enters, learns from Renzo what has happened, and grants his most disinterested prayer that the wedding of Graziella and Alonzo might take place. But the consent of the Count's mother must first be obtained, and she lives in Venice. The agreeable young fisherman, equal to anything, offers to accompany Gennaro thither before seeking death as aforesaid. This brings on a quartet for the principal characters, after which the scene closes with a sailors' chorus, "Up with the anchor." The quartet—"Sweet Graziella, while away"—will doubtless be popular, since it contains some of the composer's most agreeable and, at the same time, most artistic music. Very different in style, but equal in merit, is the sailor's chorus, with episodes for male and female voices separately, followed by a grand *ensemble* full of spirit and "go." This piece affords another example of the energy that characterizes so much of the cantata, and puts to shame many works by far younger men.

At the opening of the last scene Graziella is about to take the veil, and we gather that, the Count's mother having refused consent to the marriage, Alonzo has released his betrothed from her engagement. Introduced here is an orchestral theme which originally accompanied Alonzo's entreaty, "Think of me," in the trio of the second act. A revulsion of feeling now takes place in the maiden's breast. She despises Alonzo, but dwells fondly upon the memory of Renzo, who has perished on the battle-field, with her silver cross at his heart. The cross has been returned to her, and she invokes it as a "pure token of self-sacrificing love." Sir Julius has not made an elaborate *scena* of all this, though the temptation to do so was great, and precedent would have more than justified the step. The movements are short, but what they lack in dimension they make up in expressiveness and beauty, thus leaving no consciousness of shortcoming. In striking contrast is the music of the abbess, whose voice is now heard, calling Graziella to peace and rest. The Abbess's

song, "Our lives are like the stormy ocean," is, in a musical sense, elegantly written, and capable of profound expression in the hands of a genuine artist. A duet of leave-taking between Gennaro and his daughter follows, but the somewhat flagging dramatic interest is more completely revived when Alonzo enters, declaring that all obstacles have been removed, and claiming his bride. For answer he hears "Too late," and that is nearly all. With well-nigh comic promptitude the lover subsides; a simple chorus of nuns, "We await thee, gentle maiden," points to Graziella's assured fate, and a finale, "Every earthly tie resigning," in which the four solo voices are combined with a full chorus, brings the work to an end. This peroration, the closing section of which repeats the theme of the nuns' chorus, is not the least effective part of the work. Its broad phrases and massive harmonies give dignity and emphasis precisely where those qualities are demanded.

A large, although by no means crowded audience attended the performance of *Graziella*, and gave upon the question of its merits a verdict which must have satisfied the composer. It would, however, be too much to say that the cantata is one of the best things his facile and elegant pen has given us. Sir Julius cannot write bad, or even indifferent music; against the notion of such a possibility his whole artistic life protests. But he is not always in the same vein, and parts of *Graziella* are scored with less than the master's usual taste, while others show him labouring with qualified success to rise above the region of ordinary ideas. At the same time it would be most unjust to make him entirely responsible. There is a measure in which a workman depends upon the materials supplied him, and, sooth to say, the story of *Graziella* is common-place in incident, and told in language which, while it might be good enough for an opera libretto, as those things go, scarcely comes up to the requirements of a cantata. Such imperfections as the work contains may, nevertheless, be overlooked out of consideration for its undoubted merits. The performance was directed by the composer, whose appearance in his place elicited applause all the more hearty for the congratulations it conveyed upon his restoration to health after a temporary illness. That *Graziella* received entire justice at the hands of its executants cannot be said. Several faults of a serious nature marred the effect, and there appeared to be some lack of familiarity with the music and the composer's requirements. On the other hand, excellence was not wanting, such excellence as no force of circumstances could withdraw from the principals, band, and chorus, engaged here. The solos were taken by Mme Marie Roze (Graziella), Mme Patey (Abbess), Mr Lloyd (Renzo), Mr King (Alonzo), and Mr Campion (Gennaro). In such hands they were safe, and the audience applauded one and all, demanding an encore for the "Shipwrecked Heart" (Mr Lloyd), and "Our lives are like the stormy ocean" (Mme Patey). No less honourable, if less honoured, were Mr King's delivery of "When first this lonely shore I sought," and Mme Roze's execution of "Lover's vows." At the close Sir Julius received hearty applause from every part of the hall. The second part of the programme contained a number of miscellaneous selections, conspicuous amongst which were Mr F. H. Cowen's *Language of the Flowers*, "Deeper and deeper still," capitolly sung by Mr Maas, and warmly applauded, "Ocean, thou mighty monster" (Miss Anna Williams), and the overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*.—D. T.

(For continuation of Report see page 545.)

LEIPSIK.—Stagemann has been the first to carry out Hans von Wolzogen's suggestion that not only Wagner's friends but the artists and others connected with the various theatres of Germany should co-operate in securing the repetition at stated intervals of the Bayreuth performances. The gist of the suggestion is the formation of a committee who shall call on all the artists to contribute to the necessary fund, and Herr Stagemann has headed the list with the cash receipts of a performance of *Lohengrin* at the Stadttheater on the 14th ult.

THE ROYAL ENGLISH OPERA.—A company has been organized under the above title, by Mr T. H. Friend, for the performance of opera in English in the chief musical centres of England. Among the artists already secured are Mesdames Rose Hersee, Philippine Siedle, Blanche Cole, Helen Armstrong, and O. Summers; Messrs F. C. Packard, W. Parkinson, Faulkner Leigh, Purdon, C. Lyall, James Sauvage, R. Temple, Gilbert King, E. Harrison, and Aynsley Cook. Conductors: Messrs Arthur Howell and Julian Edwards. Principal dancers: the sisters Annie and T. Elliott. A special arrangement is being made with Mr Joseph Maas for a series of performances. Mr Friend has acquired the sole right of performance of the *Rattenfänger von Hameln*, a work which has had an unprecedented success in Germany. The libretto has been rendered into English by Mr H. Hersee.

After the Second Bayreuthiad.



Scene: Hotel de Russie, Frankfort.

PROTAGORAS.

*Good morrow, to your Majesty!
A brief repose I'm taking,
The Music of the Future gives
One's nerves a fearful shaking.*

HERMOGENES.

*Allow me, ir, this hint to give
By way of pleasing duty:
The mind alone that feels its power
Can gauge its mystic beauty.*

PROTAGORAS.

*Can beauty be allied to noise
That splits the air asunder,
With discord loud between each crash
Of vile chromatic thunder?*

HERMOGENES.

*'Tis ignorance that prompts thy speech,
While prejudice doth blind thee;
If thou wouldst rise to heights sublime,
These dead-weights cast behind thee.*

PROTAGORAS.

*To heights sublime I love to soar,
Where all is cloudless beauty,
But when confined to chimney pots,
One gets a little sooty.*

HERMOGENES.

*For such a wretched state of mind
As shown by your invective,
Go learn the Trilogy by rote,
'Twill prove a good corrective.*

PROTAGORAS.

*Invert Parnassus like a cone,
I'd rather scale its summit
Than undertake the hopeless task
Of trying e'en to hum it.*

HERMOGENES.

*Within the pure domain of Art,
Where reigns our mighty Prophet,
The stern decree is signed and sealed
That sends you all to Tophet.*

PROTAGORAS.

*To Tophet! say you. Ah, your Muse
From thence has late ascended;
You swear 'tis false—unsheath your sword,
I'm ready to defend it.*

HERMOGENES.

*Fui Tenfel! No—thou Philistine,
To England, pray, meander;
And cackle over Parsifal,
Like some poor silly gander.*

PROTAGORAS.

*Ha! Parsifal!—that little nut
Proved hardly worth the cracking;
Though "D. T." cracked it fairly well,
With Hanslick's timely backing.*

HERMOGENES.

*Ho! ho! he! he! you're all at sea;
Don't fancy such small thunder
Can exercise the mighty power
From this, our latest wonder.*

PROTAGORAS.

*If so, perhaps you'll tell me why
You sit as judge and jury,
And try to bolster up your cause
With blatant sound and fury?*

HERMOGENES.

*The Music of the Future needs
No help like that you mention;
'Tis evident your friends should see
About your safe detention.*

PROTAGORAS.

*Of course I'm mad, and you are sane,
I'm blind, but you are gifted;
But tell me what's the residue
When Parsifal is sifted?*

HERMOGENES.

*Sift Parsifal! Go, reach the stars
In all their radiant splendour,
There, sift the music of the spheres,
And Parsifal you'll render.*

PROTAGORAS.

*How's that for high! My modest chum,
Let's reach the stars together;
We then can count them one by one,
And string them on a tether.*

HERMOGENES.

*You ridicule. But come, your hand,
In this there's no deception,
Let Parsifal on English ground
Soon have a warm reception.*

PROTAGORAS.

*Aye, aye, ja wohl!—so very warm
That it may lose its flavour;
Those English have a way, you know,
Of treating such pulaver.*

HERMOGENES.

*Poor England! let her now forsake
The strains akin to madness,
The Music of the Future comes
To flood her shores with gladness.*

PROTAGORAS.

*Avaunt! "Pure Fool"—to Kundry hence,
Thy Muse—its glare and glitter,
Compared with all the mighty Past
Is only sparrows' twitter.*

WETSTAR.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR WILLING'S CHOIR.—The communication enclosed to us under this heading is an advertisement.

DEATH.

On August the 28th, ADOLPHUS FREDERICK GODFREY, late Band-master Coldstream Guards.

NOTICE.

Owing to pressure on our space we are obliged to leave over several continued articles and other interesting matter.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1882.

A May-dream.

*You came with swallows from the sea,
You came with poppies from the sun,
You came with many songs for me
— Your name was one.*

*Between the setting of the sun,
And the far stars so clear to see,
You came. But when the night was done
You went from me.*

*With neither sigh nor smile for me,
You went away when night was done,
Among the stars that fade and flee
Before the sun.*

Dofkaw.

WAGNER'S PARSIFAL.*

(Continued from page 514.)

Parsifal, that feeble drama but thankful opera-libretto, furnishes proof of its right to the latter designation in the fact that it affords the composer as well as the singers, the scene-painter as well as the designer of the costumes and the machinist, abundant scope for showing their capability of accomplishing new and difficult tasks. And more brilliant than anywhere else must the result of their combined exertions be in the ideally constructed Theatre here, under the uninterrupted guidance of Richard Wagner himself, the first stage-manager in the world. This was shown by the first two performances, which took place on the 26th and 28th July, with a different cast each time. The place of honour among the artists belongs to Mdme Materna. It would do so, even were what she has done as Kundry of less importance than it really is, for no other name is so closely identified with the existence and prosperity of the Bayreuth Festival Performance as that of Anale Materna, the first fair honorary burgess in the Wahnfried realm. Without her unexampled strength and devotion to her task as Brunhilde, the triple Cycle of the *Nibelungen Tetralogy* in 1876 would have been an impossibility. We expressed at the time, simultaneously with our admiration, our apprehension lest the popular favourite might perhaps pay for her success with the premature deterioration of her voice. Her Kundry has completely tranquillized us and for a long time to come. Not only has Mdme Materna lost nothing since the Bayreuth campaign of 1876, but she has gained something, something precious, something still beyond the reach even of the "Master" himself: Moderation. The consciousness of inexhaustible vocal powers easily leads artists of swelling strength and passionate temperament into exaggeration, and our operatic friends in Vienna know that, like others, Mdme Materna often emancipated herself too much both in her singing and acting. It has been only of late years that her Fidelio, Donna Anna, and Aida impressed the public not merely by powerful fervour, but also by more dignified artistic reticence. A still more surprising

proof of the command she has gained over herself was afforded by her Kundry, a part which absolutely challenges glaring exaggeration of its unnatural musical and dramatic contrasts. Mdme Materna did not allow herself to be led away; even in all the consciousness and pride of strength she never became ungovernable. Nay, it was in the soft, coaxing passages of her great scene with Parsifal that her voice sounded more especially beautiful. Her effective vocal performance was accompanied all through by the most careful working out of the histrionic details. Musically speaking, it is only in the second act that the part is exceptionally important and strains the artist's powers to exhaustion; in the first act, Kundry has little to sing, and in the third, nothing at all. All the more important is here, therefore, her dumb show, genuine bravura airs of mimetics and action, such as have never before been required from a singer. Not only did Mdme Materna surpass expectation by her singing in the second act, but by her silence in the third. No one will ever succeed in getting rid of what is contradictory, unnatural, and repulsive in Kundry; but Mdme Materna succeeds in elevating and rendering it highly effective. There is only one opinion as to the brilliant merit of her performance. After Mdme Materna, the next place belongs to Herr Reichmann as Amfortas. An entrancingly sonorous and sweet voice, a style full of feeling, and dignified acting, combined to bring about a perfect result. Thanks to Reichmann, the character of the sick and suffering King, who never braces himself up for dramatic effect till the end of the piece, becomes important and sympathetic. Again may Vienna congratulate itself on possessing such an artist. Herr Scaria is an admirable Gurnemanz, if only for his plain enunciation even of the smallest syllable, an inestimable quality where Wagnerianly garrulous old men are concerned. His trembling and tottering, as indicative of age, in the third act, however, do not strike us as exactly in accord with the dignity of the part: Gurnemanz ought to have grown very old, but not to have sunk down into second childhood. Herr Winkelmann, Parsifal, was very satisfactory in the first act, but, in the second, took unfortunately to shouting, and did not get out of it till the third. Herr Hill, the bass, from Schwerin, sang the magician, Klingsor, with a powerful voice and great stage self-possession; the mannered pronunciation of this singer, who frequently vocalizes incorrectly, for the sake of volume of tone, is something to which one may gradually grow accustomed. The small part of Titirel, which, however, has an important share in the plot, was in the experienced hands of Herr Kindermann. That ever-green veteran will, like a second Titirel, sing, and sing well, too, in the grave. At the second performance, Herren Reichmann, Hill, and Kindermann, retained their characters; but Kundry, Parsifal, and Gurnemanz, were cast differently. Mdme Marie Brandt, as Kundry, was the clever actress and admirably trained singer, whom we learned to esteem so highly from the engagement she played in Vienna. Her long, thin figure, and a peculiar hollow sound in her voice, were extraordinarily well adapted to the wild and weird sorceress of the first act. The passages, also, where, rising through the ground, in the bluish light before Klingsor, she has to sing, shriek, laugh, and whimper, she gave most splendidly. In short, she was unsurpassably good in everything supernatural and ghost-like in the part. For the great love and seduction scene in the second act she possesses all the requisites of art, but not of nature. Even if the spectator were to leave out of consideration her personal appearance, which is not quite appropriate here, he would be constantly reminded of the insufficiency of her vocal means. At first, however, Mdme Brandt pleased the house by her clear and delicate exposition of the narrative portion; but, on the other hand, it was only with the utmost effort that she could master the following great scene, where, in continuous high notes, the feelings are strained well nigh beyond endurance. Herr Gudehus was an excellent Parsifal, both in his singing and acting; his voice sounded fresher than Winkelmann's, but, like Winkelmann's, was disagreeably forced in the strong passages of the second act. We believe that more might be made of Parsifal, and both Winkelmann and Gudehus will one day see their way to it. Herr Siehr's Gurnemanz deserves unconditional praise. This admirable bass, whom our readers must remember with the liveliest satisfaction from a successful engagement he fulfilled in Vienna, raised the part, which is distinguished for its length

* From the *Neue Freie Presse*.

rather than for being vocally thankful, by the power of his tremendous bass voice, sonorous even in its lowest notes, and by the warmth and genuine musical quality of his delivery. Simple and dignified in bearing, he avoided even in the third act falling out of the style of the "Stage-Consecrative-Festival-Play" by a too realistic portrayal of feeble old age. What the solo singers did, combined with the equally admirable efforts of the chorus and orchestra to form an irreproachable whole. The Flower-Maidens' Chorus requires the voices to work together with unusual precision. It had been splendidly got up. The same applies to the choruses in the Hall of the Gralsburg, which were attended with serious difficulties on account of the number of boys' voices taking part in it, and of the distance separating the three groups of singers from each other. The orchestra from the Munich Opera valiantly maintained, under the Royal *Capellmeister*, Herr Levy, its high reputation. The lowering of the orchestra, one of Wagner's most beneficial reforms, again proved an excellent arrangement, inasmuch as the voices were never drowned. But the pernicious exaggeration of an expedient so correct in principle, exaggeration which not only very much lowered the orchestra, but absolutely covered it in with a tin roof, was felt on the present occasion as it was in 1876: a brilliant *fortissimo*, an exultant, crashing burst of music is impossible out of such a hole. Electrifying effects of this description were, it is true, far more seldom intended here than in the *Nibelungen*; *Parsifal* is scored with striking discretion. In the art of orchestration Wagner has not grown older; it has been developed in *Parsifal* into absolute magic, and, in every changing mood, conjures up the most wonderful effects of sound in endlessly varied gradations of light and shade.

(To be continued.)

BIRMINGHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(Continued from page 542.)

Wednesday.

The oratorio which M. Gounod calls "the work of my life," was produced this morning, under the personal direction of its famous composer, and in presence of an audience such as has not been drawn together since *Elijah* was first heard in the same place thirty-six years ago. I have already recorded the unexampled demand for tickets which both answered and justified the resolution of the committee to perform *Redemption* twice. A crowd equal in magnitude to that assembled in the Hall this morning awaits Friday night with impatience; and, were it possible to repeat the work again on Saturday, another crowd would assuredly be forthcoming. But the audience of this morning fairly constituted the tribunal to which M. Gounod has appealed. It was a representative audience in the best sense of the word; for to Birmingham the French composer's name and fame have drawn musicians from every part of the country, and even from the Continent and America. They are to be met with on all hands here, as though the occasion were a congress for the settlement of weighty matters in the art. M. Gounod should, and, probably, does, feel proud of this; proud and glad, because a very "special" jury indeed gave a verdict upon his oratorio. That verdict will probably stand. It came from an audience not likely to be swayed by impulse, and far from disposed to yield consciously to prejudice.

No very lively imagination is required to picture the scene in and around the Town Hall as throngs of eager amateurs hastened to their seats. Expectation was almost visible in the air, and certainly appeared "writ large" on every face. But amid the hurrying to and fro, and the unexampled anxiety to lose nothing of what was going forward, the festival machinery worked as smoothly as ever. Taught by long experience and business habits, the officials here have simply made their arrangements perfect; since no other could have stood this morning's test, and have comfortably seated 2,600 people before M. Gounod took his place on the conductor's stand. I do not see why, even with the performance of a new oratorio awaiting notice, this should not be mentioned with the emphatic approval due to success in a matter much more important than, at first sight, appears. M. Gounod's reception was very cordial on the part of the audience, and, on the part of the choir, even enthusiastic. Band and chorus have learned to appreciate the French composer's talent as a *chef d'orchestre*; and seem to have fallen completely under the spell of that almost magnetic attraction which he is known to exercise when conducting a performance of his own music. M. Gounod gravely acknowledged the honours paid him, and did his best to be calm. His nervousness, however, was not very difficult

to see—still less difficult to understand on an occasion so novel and weighty. Even a veteran might be anxious concerning the first submission of an oratorio to the public of a Festival which ranks first in the land of oratorio. But the composer of *Redemption* had only to turn towards the serried mass of his interpreters in order to find encouragement. Such a band as that led by M. Sainton, and such a chorus as that which Mr Stockley has trained, to say nothing of artists like Mdme Albani, Mdme Marie Roze, Mdme Patey, Mr Lloyd, Mr Cummings, Mr King, Signor Foli, and Mr Santley—all of whom were engaged in the work—gave absolute promise that *Redemption* would not suffer from lack of executive resources. The promise began to be carried out as soon as the first notes of the oratorio fell upon the ear; an orchestral introduction abounding in massive chromatic harmonies revealing the rich tone and perfect balance of the instrumental force. Here, let me say, once for all, that the performance was not free from mishaps, either in the nature of pure accidents, since they did not occur at rehearsal, or caused by the very anxiety of those concerned to do their best. I decline entering into details about them, since that would be to direct censure towards quarters where, perhaps, it is not after all deserved. The principal reason is, however, that the slips were of little importance in themselves, and only became conspicuous, like a sun spot, because standing out against a bright background. These apart, the new oratorio had a magnificent interpretation, worthy of its merits and claims, worthy of the fame of Birmingham, and the repute of English art. In apportioning resultant credit, the largest share must undoubtedly be given to the band and chorus, whose work was, in its way, done more uniformly well than that of the solo artists. About this matter no question is possible. Hardly a hitch occurred in the steady correct progress of the orchestral and choral music, which had been thoroughly mastered before being played and sung *con amore*. As a natural result, the choruses were given with all the effect intended by the composer, and that, in certain cases, was indeed splendid. Mention should especially be made of the style in which the music of the "passers-by" and the priests was rendered during the scene of the Crucifixion. M. Gounod had carefully pointed out at rehearsal the need for an individual realization of the various scenes and the good results of his teaching were apparent here. The chorus did not merely sing certain notes, but sang them with a meaning such as gave tenfold musical significance, and all its dramatic propriety, to their utterance. The more triumphant choral numbers in the second part were an easier task, and some of them came out with astonishing effect, notably that in which the great truth of man's resurrection is proclaimed amid a blaze of celestial trumpets. Hardly less imposing was that wherein the priests are taunted with the failure of their schemes, but the climax came with M. Gounod's music to the Ascension chorus, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates," or, as the present English version runs, "Unfold, ye portals everlasting." Here, by the use of simple harmonies in great masses, and by the employment of every orchestral resource, the composer stirs and excites the duller feeling. The *ensemble* was magnificent, and the audience, for once ignoring regulation, burst into long and loud applause. Turning to the solos, mention should be made of good work done by the two narrators, Mr Lloyd and Signor Foli, and by the artist (Mr Santley) who undertook the Divine verses. Scope for merely vocal display these gentlemen had little or none, the narrators especially being almost confined to monotone or slow movement up and down a section of the chromatic scale. Moreover, they were required to avoid demonstrations and sing with a calmness no more than slightly tinged by feeling. Conditions like these are a severe test, but the artists upon whom they were imposed proved equal to the strain. Mr Lloyd should be especially mentioned, since to him fell the larger share of a difficult and not very gracious task. The solos for soprano and mezzo-soprano are of less consequence and far less difficulty. These came, of course, into safe hands; Madame Albani giving charming expression to an air which sets forth the blessings following from the Sacrifice of Calvary, while Madame Patey invested with absolute pathos a short but exquisite passage put into the mouth of the Virgin Mother. With these artists Madame Marie Roze was well associated in the music of the three Holy Women. Mention should also be made of the useful, if unobtrusive service rendered by Mr Cummings and Mr King in several important numbers. So exacting is every section of this oratorio that unusual credit belongs to all who help towards a successful performance. At the close of the work, M. Gounod remained for some time on the platform, acknowledging applause that broke out again and again, in recognition of work achieved and triumph gained. How far *Redemption* is entitled to a place among successful oratorios is a question I shall try to answer in my next letter.

Some statistics connected with this memorable Festival performance are worth giving. The number of secured seats taken was 2,196, for which £2,305 16s. was paid. Adding £475 8s. 2d.

collected at the doors for the General Hospital, the morning's receipts are found to be £2,781 4s. 2d.—an increase of £1,542 17s. 1d. upon those of the corresponding period in 1879.

The present festival is before all one of novelties, and the vibration of M. Gounod's last chord had not long ceased before the first notes of Dr Gaul's *Holy City* were heard, that work opening the evening programme. I have not now to speak of intense excitement and thronging multitudes. Nevertheless a large audience assembled to honour local talent in the person of Dr Gaul, and to hear with sympathetic interest a work having undoubted claims upon favourable regard. The scope of the new cantata is limited, because, as the composer himself states, "almost entirely reflective." It embraces, in the first place, the idea of the "New Jerusalem" as a continuing city, as an abode of gladness and song, and the prize of a higher life. In the next place, it sets forth the realization of desires and promises in the services of the heavenly Temple and the blessedness of those who take part in them. Not only is the scope of the work limited, but its objects are very definite, and their attainment is helped by the store of sublime Scriptural language at the composer's service. In this respect the theme favoured Dr Gaul, who has availed himself fully and judiciously of the advantages it afforded.

The scriptural texts have been chosen with much judgment, but Dr Gaul has not confined himself entirely to Biblical sources. Two well-known hymns—Bonar's "No shadows yonder" and Neile's "For thee, O dear, dear country"—enter into the book, as does also an extract from Milton's "Blest pair of Sirens," and a small part of the "Te Deum." As may be supposed, the sentiment of the whole work is deeply religious, and I may here add that its musical treatment is quite English in point of sober expression combined with depth of feeling. The cantata contains not a bar of flashy sentiment, not a single example of straining after effect for its own sake, and no evidence of the convulsive attempts to say something new which plunge so many modern composers into the depths of incoherence. Altogether, a good, sound musical work is this *Holy City*, and as such I am glad to salute it. The first part, entitled "Contemplation," contains some numbers distinctly worthy of notice, among these being the orchestral introduction with its principal theme, afterwards used again and again in connection with the heavenly "Sanctus." The whole movement is clearly written in a smooth, flowing style, and with full evidence of the musician-ship that does not need to assert itself, in the form of eccentricity, over the setting of Bonar's hymn. I may pass to a tenor air, "My soul is athirst for God," wherein some of Dr Gaul's best characteristics appear—that is to say, a power of writing natural melody, and of treating it with genuine artistic taste. An unaccompanied trio for female voices is less distinguished because too obviously suggestive of other things with which it cannot compare, and a chorus (*pastorale*), "They that sow in tears" though as well and agreeably written as anything in the work, does not quite overcome the difficulties of six-eight rhythm when used in connection with words of deep religious feeling. An air for mezzo-soprano, "Eye hath not seen," was encored this evening, in compliment rather to its melodiousness than its expressive power. The honour was better deserved, perhaps, by the chorus, "Thine is the kingdom," with which the first part ends. Dr Gaul here proves that he knows how to write for imposing effect as well as for simple musician-ship. The treatment is broad in style, but never a mere commonplace grouping of sonorous diatonic chords. In the second part, "Adoration," a solo, with choral Sanctus, "Thus saith the Lord," early arrests attention by giving evidence of a higher power than has previously appeared. The introduction from time to time of the "Sanctus," sung *pianissimo* as though by a distant choir, has an almost dramatic effect, while the solo, in its unvarying dignity and good taste, meets the exigencies of a trying subject. Following this is a double chorus, "Let the Heavens rejoice," in which Dr Gaul employs his two choirs with a skill quite sufficient to warrant him in the free use of that magnificent resource. It may not be exactly new, but I contend that his setting of the passage, "Let the sea make a noise," &c., belongs to the successes of massive choral-writing, and the entire chorus, with its fugal conclusion, "Let the Heavens rejoice," gives evidences of grand design and adequate musician-ship. Among the remaining numbers may be noticed a contralto air, "Come, ye blessed," full of tender feeling; a melodious duet for soprano, "They shall hunger no more;" and a finale in which passages from the "Te Deum," sung in quartet, alternate beautifully with phrases in full chorus. Time, unhappily, does not serve to discuss this cantata according to its merits, but I have no hesitation in saying that it creditably represents English art, and does honour not only to the skill but to the judgment and taste of Dr Gaul. The performance, very well conducted by Mr Stockley, was most excellent, hardly a flaw reducing it below perfection. Miss Anna Williams, Mme Trebelli, Mme Patey, Mr Maas, and Mr King sang the solos

almost uniformly well, and the chorus, capitally as it has worked in other things, excelled itself. Vociferous applause followed the close of the cantata, the composer acknowledging from his seat in the gallery. Dr Gaul should be heard of again. Concerning other features in the evening's programme I shall take an opportunity of speaking later on.—D. T.

Mrs Weldon, having secured a ticket for the performance of the *Redemption* on Wednesday, in due course demanded admission, but was refused, in consequence, it is reported, of the principal artists and members of the band engaged at the Festival having received circulars stating that she intended being present and making public some circumstances pertaining to herself and M. Gounod. She would not, it was said, be permitted to be present at any performance where M. Gounod conducted. Mrs Weldon afterwards applied at the police-court for a summons for assault, but the magistrate advised her to seek a remedy in a civil court.

—o—

A GENUINE LETTER FROM A GENUINE ARTIST.

Mme Sarah Bernhardt explains in a letter why she did not fulfil her engagement at Blackpool Winter Gardens. She says:—"I was suffering very much when I went to the theatre from sore throat, which took away the greater part of my voice. I decided to play, though I had no knowledge of the room. I thought I was to play in a theatre, and not in a hall containing 15,000 persons, open to all winds. I gave proof of great courage in commencing the first act. All efforts did not carry my voice beyond the second seats. To continue would have been to mock the public, who paid to hear me. The managers told me to continue, notwithstanding that the people were unable to understand me, and they would be satisfied if they could only see me gesticulate. I am an artist, not an exhibition. If the managers had given the representation at the Prince of Wales's Theatre less money would have been made, but I should have played, being sure I should be heard and understood. The public would have been satisfied, and the honour of French artists saved.

—o—

ADELINA PATTI AT SWANSEA.

It has already been announced that Mad. Patti had most kindly volunteered to give a grand morning concert on behalf of the Swansea General Hospital. The mere announcement is sufficient to secure an almost unprecedented sale of tickets, and consequently one of the most crowded and fashionable audiences ever assembled in the Albert Hall. Those who wish to be present on the 14th of September will do well to secure their tickets, only a limited number remaining for disposal. Little is heard of Patti at home, though her slightest professional movement is recorded with all possible fulness of detail, and as though she were of the charmed circle of royalty. The interviewers (of the mansion) of celebrities have not yet thought of Patti, or, if they have thought of her, and essayed to enter the "castle," have found the door closed. Patti seeks retirement in Wales, and it was with difficulty she would consent the other day to be honoured by the address of her neighbours. Her style of living is quite French, the servants are French, and the furnishing and appointments of the residence show the same preference. The cook, the important personage of the establishment, is a genuine artist, inherited direct from the Duke de Morny. The grounds are magnificent; and one item of particular charm is a juvenile crystal palace. Here Patti passes entire days, for it is fitted up with all the conveniences of a residence, dinner being generally served here. Patti has spent £50,000 on this retreat from the world, and never repines over the outlay.—*The Cambrian*, Aug. 25.

GOUNOD IN WORCESTER.—On Friday afternoon (25th ult.) M. Gounod paid a visit to Worcester Cathedral, in company with his son, M. J. Gounod. He played for a considerable time first on the grand organ, and afterwards on that in the choir, expressing himself highly pleased with the tone of each. After spending a considerable time in the choir, crypt, &c., and visiting the Deanery, he went to the Exhibition, with the special object of seeing the pictures, returning immediately to Birmingham.—*Berrow's Worcester Journal*, August 26th.

PROVINCIAL.

INVERNESS.—Mr Kennedy, the world-known Scottish vocalist, and his family, gave last night the first of a series of three concerts in the Music Hall. The party consists of Mr Kennedy, Mr Robert Kennedy, Misses Helen, Marjory, and Maggie Kennedy. There need be no hesitation in saying that the concert was one of the very best that has been given in the Music Hall since Mr Kennedy was last here two years ago. The audience, who cheered his every appearance were happy to see that Mr Kennedy is still the best living singer of the auld Scotch songs. He passed with as great ease as ever from the pathetic wail of "Oh! why left I my name" to the quiet humour of "Come under my Plaidie" and the "Barrin' o' oor door," and to the mirth and boisterous fun of "The Laird o' Cockpen" and "Alister Macallister." All we need say of him is that on the present visit he more than fulfils the very high expectations that are always entertained regarding him. The appearance of the young ladies was all that the most critical audience could desire. Their singing is characterised by extreme simplicity. The exquisite taste with which Miss Marjory Kennedy warbled the ever charming "Wae's me for Prince Charlie" elicited the most cordial applause, and her rendering of "Jock o' Hazeldean" was no less creditable. The "Caller Herrin'" of Miss Helen Kennedy was admirable. Miss Maggie Kennedy makes her first public appearance on this tour. She was loudly cheered on being introduced by her father, and the hearty encore which followed her rendering of "We're a' noddin'" was well merited. Mr Robert Kennedy, already favourably known to an Inverness audience, received a hearty welcome. His singing of the "March of the Cameron Men" was loudly cheered, the audience insisting on a repetition of the last stanza. In other, and more difficult pieces, he appeared to great advantage. Altogether, the concert was a complete success.—*Inverness Courier*, Aug. 29.

BIRMINGHAM.—Messrs Harrison have announced a series of four subscription "popular concerts" to be given in the Town Hall, October 9, December 5, February 5, and March 6. For the first (to be conducted by Mr Sidney Naylor) they have secured the co-operation of Mdme Christine Nilsson, Mdme Antoinette Sterling, Mr Maybrick, &c., and for the second Mdme Albani, Mdme Patey, Mr Edward Lloyd, Signor Poli and Herr Joachim.

LIVERPOOL.—At the Bijou opera house, Bold Street, an opera company consisting of Mdme Sinico and Mdme Taccani; Signors Ria, Susini, Campobello, &c., have been playing Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*. The local press speak highly of Signor Campobello's Figaro and Madame Sinico's Rosina, duly complimenting the other singers, especially Signor Ria, whose "Ecco ridente," they say, was deservedly encored. In the "Lesson Scene" Madame Sinico gave "Home, Sweet Home," and on being called upon to repeat it, substituted "Robin Adair."

WORCESTER.—The members of the Amateur Vocal Union, with a few friends, spent the evening together on Tuesday, August 22nd. They enjoyed a walk by the riverside to the Ketch, where they sang some of their glees and part-songs in the gardens. They adjourned to the house for supper, after which Mr E. J. Spark, the honorary conductor, stated they had been unable to arrange one of their summer gatherings before, owing to the occurrence of the Exhibition and other causes. During last season they gave concerts at Worcester, Bromyard, and Kempsey. On the proposition of Mr J. E. Burgess, the health of Mr Spark was heartily drunk. Several more glees were then sung, and the party had a pleasant walk home.

Aida will be performed this autumn at the Teatro Pagliano, Florence.

SPÖHN's statue in the Opernplatz, Cassel, will be solemnly unveiled on the 22nd October, the anniversary of his death.

The seating capacity of the Metropolitan Opera House, now erecting in New York, will be 3,000.

The Italian papers mention as something remarkable the fact that all the artists, operatic and Terpsichorean, engaged for the approaching season at the Teatro Apollo, Rome, are Italians.

B. POLLINI'S TWENTY-FIFTH PROFESSIONAL ANNIVERSARY.—On the 11th December, 1857, Bellini's *Puritani* was performed at the Stadttheater, Cologne, the bills announcing the part of "Sir Richard Forth by Herr Pohl—a pupil of Herr Koch's—his first appearance on any stage." The twenty-fifth anniversary of this event will be duly celebrated on the 11th December next by the company of the Stadttheater and the public generally at Hamburg, where Herr Pohl, now better known as Herr Pollini, is exceedingly popular.

BAYREUTH.

Mdme Daniela von Bülow, daughter of Hans von Bülow and Kosima von Bülow (now Mdme Richard Wagner), has married Count Gravina.—Franz Liszt has addressed the following letter to the Baron von Wolzogen, editor of the *Bayreuther Blätter*:—

"MY DEAR BARON,—During and after the first performance of *Parsifal*, every one felt that he could say nothing of this miracle of a work (*œuvre-miracle*). Yes! it renders those who hear it dumb, and its sacred pendulum moves from the Sublime to the More Sublime.—Yours most truly, FRANZ LISZT."

In which case, if there be truth in the old and oft-quoted apophthegm, "There is but one step, &c., the 'Sacred Pendulum' must be pariously near the Ridiculous.—P.

A NEW POTENTATE.

(From the "Frankfurter Journal.")

During the Festival Performances at Bayreuth a "List of Visitors" was published every day. Personages of Royal or Princely rank enjoyed the honour of the best position and the largest type. There was nothing remarkable about this, the same plan being generally adopted all over Germany. But there was one circumstance of a somewhat more unusual character. Among the names of reigning sovereigns and their august relatives figured "The Violin-King, August Wilhelmj." The good Bayreuthers appear, as true inhabitants of the "Town of pure Fools," to have taken rather too literally the celebrated artist's well-known epitheton ornans.

VIENNA.

(Correspondence.)

During the present season at the Imperial Operahouse, the programme will include, as novelties, operas by Wagner, Grammann, Erkell, Dworzak, Delibes, and Verdi. In the course of the present month Verdi's *Traviata* and Delibes' *Le Roi l'a dit* will be given, with Bianca Bianchi as the heroine in each. On the 4th October, the Emperor's saint's day, a new ballet, *Melusine* (Doppler's music) with Adam's *Le Chalet*; and on the 18th November, the eve of the Empress's saint's day, Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* will be performed. The military ballet, *Carlo, der Pionnier*, will follow in the early part of December. During the Carnival, Dworzak's opera, *Der Bauer als Schelm*, and a one-act ballet, with music by F. H. Cowen, is to be produced. Then will come, in March, *Das Andreas-Fest*, by Grammann; and towards the end of April a revival of the ballet, *Karneval-Abendteuer in Paris*, with new costumes and various new dances. About the same period Franz Erkel's *Ladislaus Hunyadi*, also, will be produced, with Marie Wilt and Herr Broulik as representatives of the leading characters. In May will come the first representation of *Tristan und Isolde*, with Niemann and Kupfer as hero and heroine. There is, also, a vague prospect of *Parsifal*. True, Wagner has declared that his last opera shall only be performed at Bayreuth, but he made an equally solemn declaration with regard to the *Nibelungen Tetralogy*, and he is not altogether indifferent to author's fees. An interesting revival will be that of Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, with Pauline Lucca as Iphigenia. The attendance of the public since the commencement of the season has been unusually good. Boito's *Mephistofele* has proved especially attractive.* Mdme Krauss, of the Paris Grand Opera, was present at the first performance. In her box were Albert Wolff, one of the contributors to the Paris *Figaro*, and Count d'Osmont, the well-known musical amateur.—The committee have not yet succeeded in finding a conductor for the Philharmonic Concerts. Hans Richter still refuses to reconsider his determination of resigning, and Jahn declines accepting the post on the plea that he might seem to be ousting Hans Richter. Meanwhile, he acts as provisional conductor two or three times a week.

BERLIN.—The whilom "Bilse Orchestra," who have been playing all the summer at the Flora-Etablissement, Charlottenburg, were to start yesterday, the 1st inst., on a concert tour. They begin their concerts at the Philharmonie here in October.

* A sign that sterling music is going out of fashion.—Dr Blügel.

A MUSICAL PILGRIMAGE.

(Continued from page 523.)

Munster, August 16.

I have already described my visit to Weber's grave in the Catholic cemetery at Dresden, and now there remains to speak of other such memorials scattered about this land of musical giants. The wandering devotee in Germany has no lack of shrines. Nearly every city calls upon him for a tribute of admiration to departed yet still existing greatness, since it may be said of masters in art that though dead they live. Dresden is full of Weberian reminiscences, and does not depend for association with the composer of *Der Freischütz* merely upon the custody of his remains. This is fortunate for the Saxon capital, because some circumstances connected with the master's burial-place are not quite pleasant to contemplate. The whole neighbourhood of the cemetery is subject to floods, and I am told that the vaults are sometimes filled with water, so as to float the coffins. Weber's grave being in a part of the enclosure most liable to inundation, suffers much from this cause. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the composer's representatives will not be slow to give his bones a better resting-place in the new "God's acre" now preparing. Dresdeners, at any rate, should be reminded of this duty whenever they cross the Theater Platz and see Weber's bronze presentment standing on its pedestal, turning an eager face towards the splendid opera-house which has succeeded the edifice he served so well. Here, surely, is a statue that does not bring ridicule upon modern art. Felicitous in treatment as a whole, the figure is happiest as a portrait. Those, who are acquainted with the best and most authentic engravings of the master's face cannot but recognize this. The clear-cut features, mild yet elevated expression, and somewhat melancholy look are all reproduced in Rietschel's work, which, therefore, is not only worthy of its subject but deserving its position on a truly Royal site. An Englishman somehow feels humiliated when looking at this memorial of a great musician. It is not so much that statues in his own country are generally abominations from which the dead might pray to be saved, as that the idea of like honour to a "mere musician" would scarcely enter the public mind. There was once in Vauxhall Gardens a statue of Handel, chiselled by Roubilliac, and made familiar by Bartolozzi, who engraved it as a frontispiece to Arnold's edition of the master's works. But in time that effigy of the great Saxon disappeared from the transpontine pleasure-ground, then turned up promiscuously, so to speak, at a dealer's, was bought by the late Sacred Harmonic Society, and now adorns the shop of an eminent publishing firm. Once, too, a statue of Mendelssohn had a conspicuous place in the Crystal Palace Gardens, and may be somewhere about now, but does not occupy the site on which, with a certain amount of demonstration, it was years ago unveiled. We are not happy with the great composers. We push them aside as lumber or are ready to sell them for what they will fetch, while at Dresden Weber stands near the King's Palace, with the names of his operas shining in gilded splendour, actually as though they were records of battle and slaughter. Another spot glorified by the same genius is but a little way off. The musical visitor to Dresden inevitably journeys through the delightful country along the Elbe bank and halts at Hosterwitz, a place for ever memorable as that wherein Weber wrote his *Freischütz* and *Oberon*. No one can look upon this quiet retreat—quieter than now—without recalling the hard struggle of which it was the scene when the composer, with the shadow of death beginning to fall upon him, worked at his last opera more for the sake of wife and children than from personal interest in his own future, which he knew to be brief. Reminiscences of this kind best consecrate the scenes that bring us close to great men. They throw over them the halo of whatever is heroic in our common nature.

At Leipzig, John Sebastian Bach, dead long years ago, and separated from us by generations of active and brilliant workers in the field of music, still continue to dominate the place. That mighty memory will not be shoved from its pedestal, but towers above all others, even as soars the roof of St Thomas's Church above the buildings that crowd around. Not far from the church and the school in which the master laboured so long runs the ring of trees and verdure that has supplanted the old fortifications, and there, almost under the shadow of the sacred building, stands a Bach monument as yet barely completed. It is an unpretending thing, notable only for a good bust, in high relief, of the ancient Cantor. But, as a matter of fact, no memorial of John Sebastian was wanted on that particular spot. It might be said of him there as the tablet on the organ gallery of St Paul's Cathedral used to say of Christopher Wren, "Si monumentum queris, circumspice," for all the neighbourhood is eloquent of the great musician. Time and change have dealt lightly with St Thomas's Church and its surroundings—so lightly that were "old Bach," as Frederick the Great called him, to return to earth he would, perhaps, note but slight alterations.

One side of the church appears to have been "restored," but the other remains untouched, the sacristan's little house nestling against the venerable wall as it has done for centuries. There, too, is the world-known Thomas School, filled with the children of those whom Bach taught, and on one day of the week the youngsters go into the sacred building hand by hand and sing Bach's music, as their fathers did before them. These things bring the visitor very near the old master, and help to realize in some measure a personality dimmed not only by lapse of time, but by the very splendour of his character and works. Few of us, perhaps, try to see Sebastian Bach. We talk of his music and connect it with a name rather than with a very sturdy personality who lived a quiet, plodding life in the Leipsic of a century and a half ago, numbered his children by the score and toiled for them like a slave. The fact is, we of the present generation could hardly understand Sebastian Bach if we knew him ever so well. Our composers are a very different race, courting the fierce light of public notice and living on its radiance. They run up and down in the world with their productions, or summon all people by beat of drum to come to them, while the cackling that goes on over a successful "jay" would shame a poultry-yard. I am not finding fault with this. Times change, and men with them. The point to be observed is that we cannot focus, with our nineteenth-century eyes, the untiring, silent, and unrewarded labourer to whom we owe the *Matthew Passion* and the *Well tempered Clavier*. It is not a question of how Bach wrote so much as why, and the only possible answer, "Because he obeyed the promptings of an insatiable genius," leaves us very nearly where it found us. Certainly the master had little to distract his thoughts. Compared with his contemporary, Handel, whose voice was never silent in the *melee* of the world, Bach led the life of a recluse, and found relief in composing from the monotony of limited, unvarying duty. Perhaps Leipsic saw too much of him. What if he had gone about amongst men, had breathed the air of the country whence came the "pretty tunes" he and his son Friedemann used to travel miles to hear, and had learned to graft Italian grace and beauty upon the sturdy stem of German intellectuality? But such speculation is vain, and Bach remains for all time a typical representative of Teutonic art—the art which since his day reached its climax by invoking the spirit of Italian melody, and now bids fair to sink by exaggerating all that was crudest in its original form.

The wanderer about Leipsic may, not very far from the Stadt-theater, light upon a street called König's Strasse. It is an eminently respectable thoroughfare, chiefly devoted to private houses of a superior class. In London it would possibly be called "quiet," and given over, as a legitimate prey, to German bands and Italian organ-grinders. Being in Leipsic it is really quiet, and offers nothing to disturb the peaceful current of a musical pilgrim's thoughts. But what does the musical pilgrim in the König's Strasse? He goes there to look at the house No. 20, on which an inscription tells that within its walls Mendelssohn lived from 1835 till 1841, when he left for Berlin, and from 1846 till his death, the following year. The "commodious family residence," as it would be called in a London agent's catalogue, is a corner house, having its entrance in a side street, but presents nothing save the inscription to distinguish it from many others its neighbours. No doubt a very comfortable middle-class dwelling of an ordinary type is here, but one glorified by the beautiful life which was lived in it, and by the great and graceful genius with which it will ever be associated. I do not know whether Germany continues to value Felix Mendelssohn as he deserves. The current of taste and opinion may have set against him in his native land, as I am sometimes told it has, and if so, so much the worse both for taste and opinion. But however this may be, there is one country upon which his hold is unshakeable—the country that so spontaneously recognized him as an apostle of the beautiful and good in art, that "heard him gladly," that commanded his affection, and that cherishes his memory as well as his works. From England there will always come visitors to the König's Strasse, regarding with strong emotion the house where, in the fulness of his powers and the splendour of his fame, dwelt the composer of *Eljah*. The disciples of the "Future" sneer at all this, of course. Mendelssohn, to them is a weak babler—a purveyor of "milk for babes." So be it. No doubt the Philistines sneered at the Jewish ark when they carried it to Dagon's Temple as a spoil. But next morning their ugly idol lay prostrate and broken.

Going north-west from Leipsic not many miles, the musical wanderer comes upon another place full of interest to him, and to many who are not musical, for Halle is a great railway centre, with a strong flavour of nineteenth-century progress. 200 years ago it must have been rather sleepy—and was so sleepy, in point of fact, that the good folks became conscious of something amiss, woke up, shook themselves, and founded a university to attract lively young blood. A resident medical practitioner named Händel rejoiced at this, perhaps. It gave him a prospect of broken heads,

slashed faces, more fees, and the wherewithal to satisfy several youthful appetites, of which that belonging to his son, George Frederick, could bear a good deal before crying "Hold, enough." A statue to George Frederick now stands in the market place, and very noble and dignified the presentment of the Halle doctor's boy looks. All-knowing Bädeler informs me that it was erected by subscriptions raised in Germany and England. He is probably right, and if not he ought to be, for never had those countries better reason to combine than in this case. If Germany produced Handel, England nourished him—I don't forget that she was rather a dry nurse for some time. If Germany honours him it is for English achievements, and if the one was the land of his birth the other became that of his adoption. "George Frederick Handel, Esquire"—so he lived the greater part of his life, so he died, and so he was buried. Wherefore his effigy stands in Halle market-place wearing an English court dress. Why not? He was a sturdy person, doubtless, and far from supple-jointed before rank and riches; at any rate the London nobility thought so when he fought them long and well. But Handel knew, for all that, how to play the courtier. Did ever offended King receive such an exquisite peace-offering as the "Water Music," or one so delicately rendered? Who celebrated the battle of Dettingen, whereat, as Mr Thackeray pleasantly tells, dapper little George II. showed that he had some spirit in him? Who created an imperishable memorial of the Peace of Utrecht, and was the undisputed musical laureate of coronations and royal funerals? Handel in an English court dress by all means, especially as it reminds German spectators of the fact that England's claim to him is stronger than any arising from the accident of birth. At Hamburg one lights again upon Handelian associations, for there the master began the battle of life in earnest, and flashed the sword he was destined to wield like a brave and indomitable champion throughout his career. It is more to the purpose, however, that the Town Library contains a memorial the like of which cannot be found in the world outside Buckingham Palace, where are the great composer's priceless autographs. I refer to 131 volumes, containing seventy-seven distinct works, in the handwriting of Handel's amanuensis, J. C. Smith, and enriched with many notes and emendations from the master's own pen. It is said that at the composer's death, these treasures passed into Smith's family, but what became of them between then and 1856 does not seem clear. In the year just named, however, they were for sale at the shop of a Bristol dealer, and the late Mr Bowley, treasurer of the Sacred Harmonic Society, despatched a messenger at once to secure them. Unhappily, a foreigner was first in the field, M. Victor Schoelcher, the master's biographer, snapped them up; from his hands they passed, in 1868, into those of Dr Chrysander, another and a better biographer; and in 1875 they were placed in the Hamburg Library. So did England lose for ever a prize she should have jealously kept. It is unaccountable that the very existence of these volumes seems to have been forgotten till their description appeared in the dealer's catalogue. However, crying after spilt milk avails nothing, and English amateurs must find what comfort they can in the fact that the town where Handel began his labours is not an inappropriate place for such a sample of the fruit they bore.—D. T.

WAGNER'S *PARSIFAL*.*

(Continued from page 529.)

"In the Zauberburg we become acquainted with Klingsor, respecting whom our curiosity has been greatly excited during the first act. He does not quite come up to our expectations. In fact, he is a magician of the common bad old sort. You can see at once by his red and black feathers what sort of a bird he is. Long before we catch a glimpse of Parsifal, he has espied that hero in a magic-mirror and lured him on with the intention of playing him a nasty trick. To this end he employs the means utilised by the Erl-King for a similar purpose—handsome girls are to disturb the inexperienced youth's moral equilibrium. For the success of this depravatory undertaking, Klingsor reckons, in particular, upon the most dangerous of his sirens, Kundry, whom he conjures up in order to impart his formal instructions to her—no longer the breathless Kundry, who gasped past us in the first act, that old, ugly, slovenly slut, with bristly elf-locks and a complexion à la Azucena; but a shadowy, phosphorescent apparition in blue glistening robes, so indistinctly seen that it may, without difficulty, be taken for a superhumanly lovely woman. . . . As Parsifal has approached the magic castle, he has been encountered by several armed men, whose social position is not indicated in the libretto, but whom we may assume to be demoralised Grail-Knights, who prefer female society in an odorous garden to staving with Amfortas in his sick room. Parsifal soon settles these eccentric persons, whereupon

* From "The Theatre."

Klingsor and his tower sink into the earth, and the magic garden takes their place. From all quarters 'flower-maidens' rush in, crying and complaining of the rough handling their male friends have been subjected to by Parsifal, whom they abuse in uncommonly strong language for 'thrashing their playfellows.' 'Who,' they ask with diverting frankness, 'will play with us now?' In his quality of 'pure fool,' Parsifal accepts the word 'play' in its purely foolish signification, and answers quite innocently, 'That will I, and gladly!' The ladies, although they have been vituperating him up hill and down dale, no sooner hear that the good-looking young fellow is ready to 'play' with them than they begin to quarrel over his possession—which is just like the sex. Parsifal, however, resists all the temptations they subsequently offer him to 'play'; indeed, when they become rather pressing, he is extremely rude to them. Suddenly, and from behind a hedge, a voice exclaims, 'Parsifal.' It is that of Kundry who reminds the damsels that their 'playfellows' are waiting to have their injuries attended to, and to be nursed. They take the hint and depart, leaving Kundry alone with Parsifal. Her love is of a far more calculating and insidious character than that of the simple-souled flower-girls. In order to reach Parsifal's heart she selects the well-known roundabout road of consolation. She tells him, in moving accents, how his mother died, and when the poor lad sinks to her feet in an agony of grief, draws him gently towards her and gives him 'the first kiss of love as the last greeting of a mother's blessing.' Wagner's stage instructions prescribe 'a long kiss.' And a very long kiss it is! Whilst it is going on, Parsifal tastes the whole sweetness, and bitterness too, of sensuality. He experiences desire and pain simultaneously; scales fall from his eyes; all at once he knows what the wounded king, whose sufferings he had contemplated without appreciating them, must be going through; pity stirs in his breast, awakening his intelligence, and he shouts wildly, 'Amfortas! The wound, the wound! It burns within my heart!'"

"Having attained the apogee of his dramatic action, Wagner weakens its effects by tedious prosiness. It is, I know, useless to complain of this, because he is immutably certain that whatever he does is right. He will go on in the old, old tiresome way, whatever one may say. Kundry and Parsifal, after they have settled the really important part of their business, persist in conversing exhaustively about this and that, like acquaintances who have risen from their seats to take leave of one another, hat in hand, but cannot find the door. Wagner's heroes always resemble parliamentary orators—once in possession of the House they never stop spouting until their whole stock of ideas is exhausted. Meanwhile, what are the others to do, who have to listen? Parsifal has no time to lose. He ought to hasten to the suffering monarch. He has found out what Pity means. He is the Chosen One. Nevertheless, his composer condemns him to play the part of a patient listener, in which rôle he is most assuredly not calculated to develop enthusiasm in the audience. However, he succeeds in withstanding Kundry. In vain Klingsor hurls the sacred spear at the Pure Fool; it hovers over his head; he catches it in the air, describes the sign of the Cross with its point, and Klingsor's magnificence collapses into dust and ashes, whereupon Parsifal goes off with the spear to look for the invalid King."

"The third act of *Parsifal* has given rise to desperate conflicts of opinion. Some are enraptured with it, others are disgusted. 'A Revelation!' exclaim the former ecstatically; 'A blasphemous parody,' growl the latter. . . . Enter Gurnemanz, aged and decrepit, from a hut. He has heard a dismal groaning proceeding from a thicket hard by, and there, sure enough, he finds Kundry in a condition of death-like catalepsy. With great difficulty he succeeds in rousing this remarkable woman, who has lost all her demoniac beauty and is once more as revoltingly ugly as in the first act. . . . 'Who nears now the holy spring?' enquires Gurnemanz, looking out towards the woods. Gurnemanz does not know; but we do, on the spot. The orchestra lets us into the secret, by sounding Parsifal's *leitmotiv* on a French horn; we thus become aware that Parsifal is due. The *leitmotiv* system, therefore, obviously does not contribute to the heightening of dramatic interest; it makes the music rend asunder the veil of which the poem has not resolved to lift a corner.

"Parsifal is no longer the hearty lad of the second act, but seems to be as dark, stern, hard, and uncomfortable as the black armour in which he is clad. Being informed by Gurnemanz that he is on holy ground, and that it is Good Friday, he puts off his harness, whereupon the old gentleman recognizes him as the person he turned out of doors at the Grail-Castle many long years ago. Straightway he tells him (at great length) so gruesome a story of the

privations endured by the fraternity since that time that Parsifal faints away. Then come *tableaux vivans* of events recorded in Sacred History. Kundry washes his feet, dries them with her hair, and anoints them; Gurnemanz sprinkles holy water on his head. Parsifal, now attired in a long white robe reaching to his ankles, and "made up" with luxuriant waving hair, parted in the middle, and a full fair beard, offers a faithful impersonation of the Redeemer, as usually represented to us by the pictorial art. Many people consider this presentment revolting. The modern stage is essentially profane, and now that plays have passed out of ecclesiastical hands into secular ones, offers a striking contrast to its mother the Church. Incidents and persons appertaining to the House of God should not be exhibited on the theatrical boards. Even the Berlin Chief of Police is of this opinion, for he has lately prohibited the display of Biblical figures in the wax-work shows. . . .

(To be continued.)

A NEW TEMPLE.

"Not erected by Solomon."—*Old Play*

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—One of the greatest achievements and crowning glories of this century will be the rearing for the people of this great country, of their gigantic national Temple of Knowledge—I refer to the Ministry of Public Instruction, Public Opinion and of National Education roughly sketched in a pamphlet by the writer five years since, embracing under one roof all the great national departments of (with material) knowledge, whether in literature, science, or art. To rear such a vast national edifice must necessarily be the labour of years, and it surely cannot be premature to direct public attention to such an important national work, or why even designs, plans, specifications, and estimates of our great architects, builders, engineers and others, should not be in course of preparation and discussion. Space, unfortunately, will only allow me to allude to the nation's vast National Education Department of the Fine Arts, as the nation's vast National Studio of Painting, with ample space for say one hundred separate national easels, endowed by the state at salaries of £1,000 a year for both sexes, placed by the state for the use of distinguished English (and foreign) painters, permanently engaged and assiduously at work, painting to the glory of the English and even of other nations, and similarly of one hundred separate national easels endowed by the state at salaries of £100 or more a year, placed by the state for the use of students chosen from the people reserved for those only who exhibit a genius for the art, and so with the nation's National Studio of Sculpture, and with that vast National Education Department, the nation's National Academy of Music, the sole tuition of every musical instrument being separately endowed by the state, placed by the state for the use of students chosen from the people, one student to each instrument, &c., &c.—I am sir, your obedient servant,

AUGUSTUS J. HARVEY.

6, Cromwell Terrace, South Town, Great Yarmouth.

[Some parts of this letter are legible; other parts are illegible; the whole, if not clearly put forth, is shadily comprehensible.—*Dr Bridge.*]

TECHNICAL SCHOOL, BRADFORD,

Programme of Organ Recital by Mr Walter Clough.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17th:—

| | |
|---|--------------|
| "Cornelius" March | Mendelssohn. |
| Offertoire, in F major | Wely. |
| Air, with variations (Symphony, in D major) | Haydn. |
| Overture, <i>Poet and Peasant</i> | Suppe. |
| Gavotte, in B flat major | Handel. |
| Marche Triumphale | Clough. |
| Grand Chœur, in D major | Guildmant. |
| Fanfare and Finale | Leimms. |

The Musician's Association, Sondershausen, gave, a short time since, a concert in remembrance of Joachim Raff, whose quartet, "Die schöne Müllerin," Grand Sonata in A major for Pianoforte and Violin and "Sinfonietta for Wind-Instruments" were played on the occasion.

SCRAPS.

(From our Teutonic Correspondent.)

HAMBURG.—A body of distinguished ladies and gentlemen, not satisfied with the laurels they won as amateurs at the Salons in the last London season, intend their zeal, to continue to delight themselves, and others by giving a charity Concert at the elegant golden salon of Hamburg, singing, playing and reciting, to their hearts desire.—The room was not only full, but cramed by the resident english Colony and the result must have been a paying one to the charitable Institute of Hamburg—We heard the moon has raised Benedict—Non e ver—For ever and ever—Golden love—Crudel perche—No sir—Bird of Spring time—suddenly the composer appeared at the Piano, it was a surprise his name was not in the Programme, after his Song he digged up again creating Sweet melody on the Piano. Every one was charitably inclined and applauded the amateur artists and every body artists specially did enjoy the Concert—The last Song was Sleepy Song—"Ende gut alles gut."

GENEVA.—The international Music Festival began with an immense concours of 8000 Singers and military bands on Sunday the 13th. Prizes were won by the Choral Unions of Beuncon, Lausamie Neurnburg, and Lyon.

MAINS.—The town theatre begins its winter season on the first of October with Carmen Herr Emil Steinbach as Kapelmeister.

WIESBADEN.—Herr August Wilhelmj has returned from his successful tournée through America, Australia and the Cape loadn with laurels and gold, his first *rentrée* will be to-morrow (the 27th) at the Kursaal when he will be soloist at the 5th Kunstler Concert.—L.

WAIFS.

Mdme Sarah Bernhardt was announced to perform at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool, on Monday night. She appeared in one act and then left the pavilion, being suddenly indisposed. It is hoped that the illness of the celebrated actress may be merely temporary.

Tamberlik was lately at Trouville.

The Brussels Conservatory re-opens on the 4th inst.

Hassler's Musical Association, Halle, has been dissolved.

Scarlatti, a Tuscan, is the new manager of the Milan Scala.

Carlotta Patti starts next month on a concert tour in Ireland.

Merelli's Italian operatic company drew good houses at Prague.

Madeleine Schiller is spending the summer at Richfield Springs, U.S.

Tomaso Salvini, the great tragedian, will shortly revisit America.

Mrs Osgood has decided on remaining another twelvemonth in America.

A new theatrical journal, *L'Araldo*, has been published at Florence.

Remenyi, the Hungarian violinist, will pass the winter in Cuba and Mexico.

A ballet entitled *La Rosa magica* has been well received at the Politeama, Milan.

Teresa Théo opens at the Casino, New York, on the 11th inst., in *La jolie Parfumeuse*.

A new zarzuela, *El gran Tamerlan de Persia*, is announced at the Circo de Rivas, Madrid.

Mapleson's opera season at the New York Academy of Music commences on the 16th October.

A new theatre is being erected at Marseilles, on the site of the Alcazar, destroyed by fire last year.

An Italian buffo opera company opened on the 26th ult. at the Buen Retiro, Madrid, with Suppe's *Bocaccio*.

Miss Hope Glenn, the contralto who accompanies Christine Nilsson on her American tour, is an "Iowa girl."

Irma Mery, now singing at the Theatre Royal, Athens, is about to marry Gialdino Gialdini, the composer.

The King of Servia has conferred on Adolf Rückert, violinist, Geneva, the Officer's Cross of the Takovo Order.

Marchetti's *Ruy Blas*, with Pappenheim as the heroine, has been performed at the National Theatre, Buenos Ayres.

Mille Laescher, a member of the corps de ballet at the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna, will shortly be married to Count Hardegg.

The new theatre about to be built on the site of the present Operahouse at Buenos Ayres will be the largest in South America.

Camillo de Nardis, of Naples, has carried off the prize offered by the Royal Musical Institute, Florence, for the best five-part chorus.

Albert Dietrich's opera, *Robin Hood*, will be performed this season at the Ducal Theatre, Dessau, and the Stadttheater, Leipsic.

Edmund Neupert, a Norwegian pianist of considerable repute in his own country, commences this month a concert tour in the United States.

One of the chief features of the Emma Abbott opera company's programme in America this season is to be Benedict's *Lily of Killarney*.

Mdme Liebhart is passing her vacation partly in the gay and fashionable town of Folkestone, and partly in the quiet, humble village of Southend.

For fifteen performances at Monte Carlo, Mad. Marie Heilbronn (Vicomtesse de la Panouse) receives, according to report, 60,000 francs. (600,000.—*Dr Blüthner*.)

The Residenz-Theater, Hanover, lately sold by auction, has been purchased by the Guild of Brewers, who have advertised it to let at an annual rent of 12,000 marks.

Verdi, Ponchielli, Boito, and Marchetti have been nominated members of the Musical and Dramatic Committee appointed by the Italian Minister of Public Instruction.

Caspare Angiolini, ballet-master at the Milan Scala from 1780 to 1782, wrote the music to his own ballets, of which he produced no fewer than twenty-six during the two years he held his appointment.

Alexander Hessler, manager of the German and French Theatres in Alsace-Lorraine, celebrated yesterday, the 1st inst., his 25th professional anniversary. On the 15th inst., he will celebrate his 10th managerial anniversary.

Among the numerous candidates for the post of director at the Hoch Conservatory, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, are Freidrich Gernsheim, Franz Willner, and Max Bruch. Julius Stockhausen has publicly contradicted the report that he is one of the competitors.

The will of Mr James Turle, late of The Cloisters, Westminster, who died on June 28 last, was proved on the 2nd ult. by his sons, the Rev. William H. Turle and James Robert Turle, executors, the value of the personal estate amounting to over £24,000. The legatees under the will are testator's seven children.

"I should like to have a coin dated the year of my birth," said a maiden lady, certainly no longer a girl; "do you think you could get me one?" I am afraid not. These very old coins are exceedingly rare," he replied. And yet he could not see why, when he met her the next day, she did not speak to him.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE.—Mr G. Reay-Mackey, late assistant-paymaster, Royal Navy, and secretary to Admiral Rice and Admiral Luard, at Malta, has been appointed manager of the Crystal Palace; and Mr G. G. Cleather, manager of the Scarborough Aquarium, and late secretary of the Whitby and Scarborough Railway, has been appointed assistant manager. Major Flood Page will leave for Australia in the Orient steamship Austral on September 7th.

Mr Oberthür has been "touring" in Germany, visiting Kissingen and Schwalbach, where he gave a concert, assisted by Mr Warrenrath. He there played his "Meditation," as well as his concertina for harp and orchestra, and Mr Warrenrath sang, among other pieces, Mr Oberthür's romance, "The Rose and the Ring," and the band played the overture to his opera, *Floris von Namür*. From Schwalbach Mr Oberthür visited Soden (Mendelssohn's favourite village, near Frankfort), proceeding thence to Nuremberg, Bayreuth, and Munich, and is now en route to Styria and Vienna.

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1864. Tradition says that the old melody of 'The Beggar Boy' was once sung in the days when she was a poor child by the distinguished artist now known as Mdme Christine Nilsson. Included in the Danish songs is the traditional 'Dannebrog,' the music of which is attributed to one 'Bay.' It would be interesting to inquire the foundation for this statement, as the origin of the Danish National Anthem was generally understood to be unknown. The tradition of the 'Dannebrog Banner,' which, in 1719, fell down from heaven to bring victory to the Danish arms, is duly recorded in a footnote. Most of the Dutch songs given date back to the sixteenth century; and there are besides three songs by W. F. G. Nicolai, and one Flemish song. Altogether eighty-three of the national songs of northern Europe are included in this valuable and interesting book. In future editions a larger preface or more footnotes, giving further particulars of the old songs whose history is known, would be welcome. Equally interesting are the songs of Eastern Europe, recently issued by Messrs Boosey, and likewise edited by Mr and Miss Kappey. Among the thirty-four Austrian songs, the large majority are *volkslieder*, and they include Tyrolean, Styrian, and Polish songs, two of them by Chopin. These are followed by twenty-three characteristic specimens of Hungarian songs, giving a very fair idea of the peculiarities of Hungarian music, and comprising modern songs by Liszt, and some traditional songs of Bosnia, Moravia, and Dalmatia. The first of the Bohemian songs is the 'War-song of the Hussites,' once, it is believed, the national song of the country. A few specimens of Servian, Swiss, Greek, and even Turkish melodies. The last are very peculiar; and the peculiar intervals common to this and other Eastern music are claimed by some to have been handed down direct from the music of the ancient Hebrews."—*Figaro*.

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